BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

BC Stats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 08-12 March 20, 2008

- **BC's inflation rate rose to 1.1% in February**
- **Sales of manufactured goods slipped 0.4% in January**
- **Visitor entries to Canada via BC rose 1.8% in January**

Prices

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate rose to 1.1% in February, yet remained the lowest among the provinces in the country.** Energy prices surged 5.5% due to double-digit increases in the cost of gasoline (+15.0%) and fuel oil & other fuel (+11.3%) providing much of the momentum for the rise in the overall price level. Excluding energy, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for BC was 0.6%.

  The cost of shelter rose 2.5% primarily as prices for owned accommodations (+3.2%), specifically home owner insurance (+3.8%) leaped higher. Operating an automobile (+1.6%) became more costly in February largely due to an increase in prices at the pump (+11.3%). While consumers paid slightly less for groceries (-0.2%), 'eating out' took a bigger bite of the household budget (+2.1%). Prices for clothing fell 4.8% while alcoholic beverages & tobacco rose 1.4%.

  Inflation rates were on the rise in BC's two major urban centres. In Vancouver, inflation inched 0.2 percentage points higher to 1.3%. Meanwhile, in Victoria, consumers faced a lower increase in prices (+0.5%)

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Nationally, consumers faced a 1.8% increase in prices in February, a drop of nearly half of a percentage point from the 2.2% observed in January.** Less pressure from rising gasoline prices (+17.1%) along with falling car prices (-6.8%) were the main reasons for the slowdown in inflation. Year-over-year price increases were highest in Alberta (+3.5%) and Saskatchewan (+3.4%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **Shipments of goods manufactured in British Columbia slipped 0.4% (*seasonally adjusted*) in January, adding to the 2.2% drop in the previous month.** Durable goods producers saw shipments rise (+1.5%) as sales by both the fabricated (+7.3%) and machinery (+4.4%) industries served to offset declines by primary metal (-3.8%) and wood (-0.4%) producers.

  Non-durable shipments fared less well as sales by manufacturers of paper products (-7.2%) and food (-5.5%) dropped sharply in January. This was only partly offset by a pair of double-digit increases in sales in the plastics & rubber (+16.7%) and chemical (+12.2%) industries. Overall, shipments of non-durable goods declined 2.7%.

  While New Brunswick (-5.6%), Manitoba (-0.8%) and British Columbia (-0.4%) saw sales slump, Canadian manufacturers saw a 1.3% lift in shipments. Overall, 16 of 21 industries, from producers of both durable (+1.8%) and non-durable (+0.8%) goods, posted increases in January. Ontario (+2.0%) and Quebec (+1.2%) provided almost all (97%) of the $633 million increase in manufacturing sales.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Motor vehicle sales in the province started the New Year with a 1.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) increase in January.** Sales were up in every province, resulting in an 8.2% increase at the national level, the largest month-to-month increase in motor vehicle sales in two and a half years. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia's wholesalers saw sales in the province rise 1.4% (*seasonally adjusted*) to**

Report Immigrant Population of British Columbia

Did you know...
In 2007, an average of 3.1million hens laid 64 million dozen eggs in British Columbia.
Data Source: Statistics Canada

$4.3 billion in January. Increased demand for motor vehicles (+6.9%) and building materials (+3.4%) offset declines in sales of machinery & equipment (-4.5%), lumber & millwork products (-2.7%) and food products (-1.4%). Nationally, sales improved in every province, pushing the national average 2.6% higher in January. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The year-over-year volume of residential sales on the Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) in BC slipped 9.8% to 6,822 units in February 2008.** The average price for a home in the province reached $478,172, a 15.8% increase since February 2007.
Data Source: British Columbia Real Estate Association

Tourism

- **Visitor entries to Canada via BC rose 1.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in January, on the heels of a 1.9% decline in December.** US entries rebounded (+2.2%) as there were more Americans on same-day (+4.5%) and overnight (+1.0%) trips. Visitation from overseas countries advanced (+0.9%) for the third straight month, driven by an increase in the number of European travellers (+0.9%). Entries from Oceania fell (-0.6%) for the first time since July 2007, and travel to the province from Asia (-0.4%) was also down.

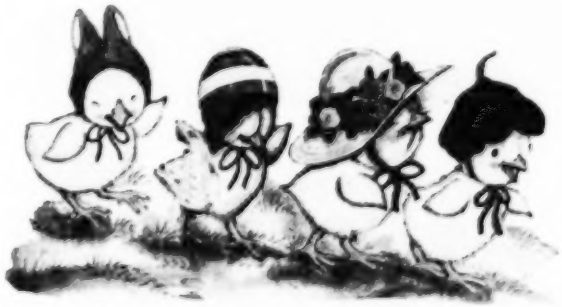
  The number of Canadians returning home through BC inched up 0.6% as travel from the US (+0.7%) and overseas (+0.3%) increased in January. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Nation

- **The nation's composite leading index dipped 0.3% in February following a 0.1% increase in January.** Much of the weakness can be attributed to poor performance in manufacturing, particularly with respect to output in the auto industry. Household spending was up as expenditures on durable goods rose due to the recent reduction in the goods and services tax (GST). In the US, the leading indicator had fallen 0.2% in February due to continued weakness in consumer confidence and a slumping housing market, providing further downward pressure on Canada's manufacturing sector.
Data Source: SC, Catalogue 11-010-XWB

- **Between 2004 and 2005, an average hospital stay in Canada cost nearly $7,000 not including emergency care, day surgery, long-term care, clinics or fee-for-service payments.** Among all patients admitted to an acute care hospital, circulatory diseases, such as heart attacks and strokes, accounted for the highest share of in-patient costs at nearly one-fifth (19%) due to the high cost-per-stay ($11,260). Injury made up the next largest expense for hospitals, making up one-tenth of total in-patient costs. Excluding childbirth, on average, it costs more to hospitalize and treat male patients ($7,964) than it did for female patients ($6,236). At nearly $14,000 per stay, the most expensive hospital medical conditions were those involving the treatment of congenital malformations or chromosomal abnormalities at birth. *Data Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information*

- **Between 1997 and 2006, the average work week began to decline despite increased growth in full-time rather than part-time jobs.** Average hours fell as a declining number of full-time employees working long hours (49+ per week) offset the rising number of part-time workers whose work week grew longer. Education was also a key factor as those with post secondary education were less likely to be working long hours. *Data Source: SC, Catalogue 75-001-X*



Have a Happy Easter!

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

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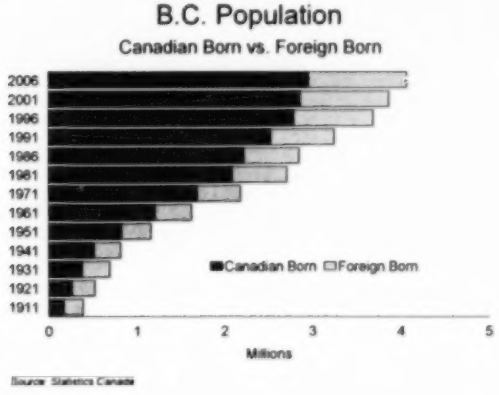
Originally published in
Census Fast Facts Issue 2006-05

Immigrant Population of British Columbia

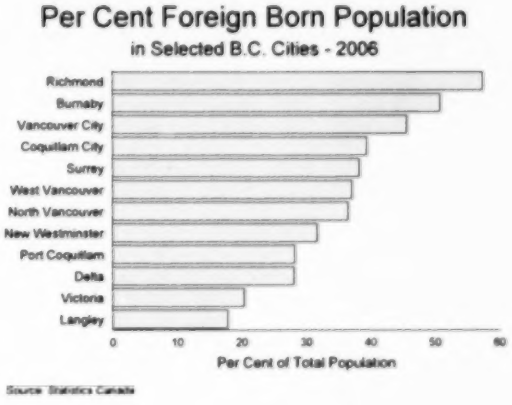
Immigrant population refers to people who were foreign born and have been permitted by Canadian immigration authorities to live in the country permanently. Due to high immigration inflows to the province over the last two decades, the foreign born population in B.C. has continued to increase to reach 1,119,215 persons in 2006, representing more than a quarter (27.5%) of the overall population in B.C. According to the 2006 Census, approximately 16%, or 177,800 of the 1.1 million new immigrants who arrived in Canada over the past 5 years settled in British Columbia.



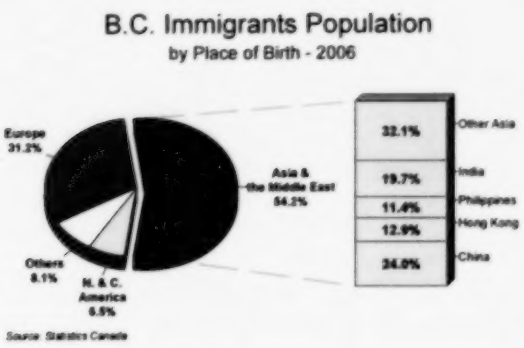
Except for Ontario, B.C. had the highest proportion of foreign born population in 2006. The immigrant population has also grown faster than their Canadian born counterpart as indicated by the higher share of immigrants in the B.C. total population when compared to those recorded in previous census (22.3% in 1996 and 26.1% in 2001).

The census metropolitan area (CMA) of Vancouver was home to 831,300 immigrants in 2006, accounting for almost 74.3% of all the foreign born population in B.C. In the City of Richmond, foreign born persons outnumbered their Canadian born counterpart in 2006. More than one-half (57.4%) of the 173,600 residents in that city were not born in Canada. This made Richmond the top Canadian municipality with the highest proportion of immigrant population.

Among all Canadian cities, Surrey had the fastest growing number of foreign born persons over the last five years. The number of Surrey residents who were foreign born had increased by 30.9 per cent between 2001 and 2006.



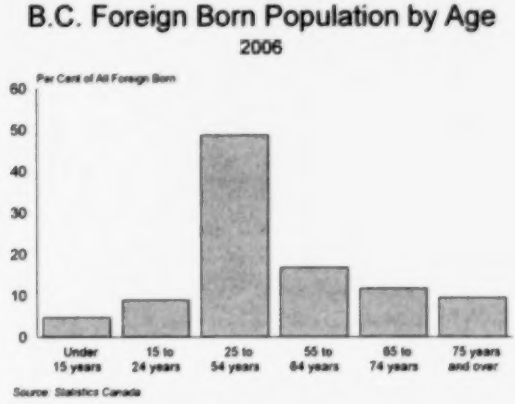
More than half of the foreign born persons living in B.C. in 2006 came from Asia or the Middle East. European immigrants accounted for approximately one-third of the immigrant population in the province and the rest were mainly made up by immigrants from Africa and other world areas.



Of all the B.C. immigrant population in 2006 who were born in Asia, almost one-third were from China Mainland, followed by those from India, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Immigrants from China Mainland represented 13.0 per cent of all the foreign born population in the province, whereas India accounted for 10.7 per cent, Hong Kong 7.0 per cent and the Philippines 6.2 per cent. Immigrants born in the United States were the next largest group representing 5.1 per cent of B.C.'s immigrant population.

More than half (54.1%) of the B.C. foreign born population in 2006 had been living in Canada for at least 15 years. Approximately 15 per cent of the immigrant population in the province arrived in the country prior to 1991. A relatively higher proportion of the European immigrants had been living in Canada for a longer time when compared to those from Asia and Africa. In 2006, 81.2 per cent of European immigrants living in B.C. came to Canada before or in 1991, whereas 63.4 per cent of all Asian born immigrants in B.C. arrived in the country after 1991.

There were slightly more females than males in the immigrant population of B.C. In 2006, of 100 foreign born persons residing in the province, 52 were women. A majority of B.C.'s foreign born population were middle aged, with persons in the retirement ages representing the next largest group. Similar to what has been indicated by other immigration statistics, the 2006 Census also confirmed that recent immigrants to B.C. tended to be younger. More than half (56.7%) of the immigrant population in B.C. who arrived in Canada during the last five years prior to the 2006 Census were in the 25-54 age group. It has also been shown that recent immigrants to B.C. tended to have a younger median age than the overall population in the province.



Approximately nine in every one hundred foreign born persons in B.C. had no English language ability. Recent immigrants—those who landed between 2001 and 2006—reported an even higher percentage (14.8%) of English language deficiency. In 2006, nearly half of the B.C. foreign born population stated neither English nor French as the language they spoke most often at home.

"Census Fast Facts" is a series of feature articles published by BC Stats that focus on different aspects of British Columbia's demography based on the 2006 Census. Please visit: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/facts/facts.asp

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Email transmission information service from BC Stats

also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/07	% change on one year ago
BC	4,402.9	1.5
Canada	33,091.2	1.0
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2006	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	180,328	6.4
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	158,335	3.3
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita)*	36,649	1.9
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	23,996	5.0
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Jan	3,370	-0.4
Merchandise Exports - Jan	2,339	3.0
Retail Sales - Dec	4,818	1.1
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - Feb 2008)		
BC	1.1	1.5
Vancouver	1.3	1.8
Victoria	0.5	0.9
Canada	1.8	2.2
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on prev. month
(seasonally adjusted)	Feb '08	
Labour Force - BC	2,403	0.0
Employed - BC	2,303	-0.1
Unemployed - BC	99	1.6
		Jan '08
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	4.1	4.1
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	5.8	5.8
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Mar 19/08	Mar 21/07
Prime Business Rate	5.25	6.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	7.25	6.40
- 5 year	7.29	6.49
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Mar 19/08	Mar 21/07
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0028	1.1578
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9849	0.8654
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Feb '08	
BC	766.55	3.1
Canada	770.29	5.0

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

The price is right

Starting April 1, current subscription periodicals will be free to browse and download on our web site. All users will have free access both to the articles and data tables in PDF format. Paper-format periodicals and subscriptions will continue to be priced.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/releases/free_rel.asp

High Technology - 2007

Input Indicators of the British Columbia High Technology Sector - 2007 Edition

This publication highlights conditions affecting the province's high technology sector from a supply-side perspective by tracking 37 business and economic climate indicators for BC, with comparisons to other provinces.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/hi_tech.asp#HTpubs

Topic Tables – 2006 Census

What are the top languages spoken at home in your community? Where were a community's immigrants born? A different approach.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/topics/topics.asp

2007 Municipal Populations

Total population for municipalities and Regional Districts for July 1, 2007, as well as revised figures for 2002 to 2006, are now online.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/estspop.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index, February 2008

Next week

- Business Indicators, March 2008
- Current Statistics, March 2008
- Migration Highlights, 4th Quarter 2007

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